

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1 1. (Original): A wafer having a plurality of devices being fabricated thereupon, wherein said
2 wafer is configured to undergo a chemical mechanical polishing (CMP) step on a surface of the
3 wafer comprising:

4 a plurality of arrays wherein each array includes a plurality of test features that project
5 from the wafer surface to be polished, wherein each projecting test feature is formed with a
6 relatively hard upper surface layer; and

7 wherein the plurality of projecting test features within an array have an identical
8 diameter, and wherein the diameter of the projecting test features of each different array differs.

9 2. (Original): A wafer as described in claim 1, wherein said upper surface layer is
10 comprised of diamond-like-carbon (DLC).

11 3. (Original): A wafer as described in claim 1, wherein each said projecting test feature has a
12 diameter that is less than approximately 5 μm .

13 4. (Original): A wafer as described in claim 1, wherein each said array is formed with an array
14 area of at least approximately 400 μm^2 .

15 5. (Original): A wafer as described in claim 1, wherein each said array is formed of sufficient
16 size to be viewable with an optical microscope, where the projecting test features within each
17 array are too small to be viewable with an optical microscope.

18 6. (Original): A wafer as described in claim 1, wherein the diameter of the projecting test
19 features within an array is associated with a known polishing time in which said upper surface
20 layer of the test feature is removed by the polishing process.

21 7. (Original): A wafer as described in claim 6, wherein the different diameter of the projecting
22 test features of each differing array corresponds to a particular polishing time increment.

23 8. (Original): A wafer as described in claim 7, wherein said polishing time increment is five
24 seconds.

25 9. (Original): A wafer as described in claim 1, wherein said group of arrays includes nine
26 arrays.

27 10. (Original): A wafer as described in claim 1, wherein each array within a group of
28 arrays includes a unique identification symbol associated therewith.

29 11. (Original): A wafer as described in claim 1, wherein each array includes a plurality of
30 projecting test features that are arranged in a plurality of rows and columns.

31 12. (Currently amended): A process for ~~fabricating a magnetic head upon~~ the chemical
32 mechanical polishing of a wafer surface, ~~including a chemical mechanical polishing (CMP)~~
33 ~~process step~~, comprising:

34 forming a plurality of arrays upon a wafer surface, wherein each array includes a plurality
35 of test features that project from the wafer surface to be polished, wherein each projecting test
36 feature is formed with a relatively hard upper surface layer, wherein each said array includes a
37 plurality of projecting test features having an identical diameter, and wherein the diameter of the
38 projecting test features of each array differs;

39 polishing the wafer surface in a CMP step;

40 checking the progress of the CMP step by examining the wafer surface with an optical
41 microscope to determine which of the arrays includes test features in which the upper surface
42 layer of the test features has been removed by the CMP polishing; and

43 stopping said CMP step when it is seen through the optical microscope that test features
44 of a previously determined array have had their upper surface removed.

45 13. (Currently amended): A process for ~~fabricating a magnetic head~~ the chemical mechanical
46 polishing of a wafer surface as described in claim 12, wherein said upper surface layer is
47 comprised of diamond-like-carbon (DLC).

48 14. (Currently amended): A process for ~~fabricating a magnetic head~~ the chemical mechanical
49 polishing of a wafer surface as described in claim 12, wherein each said projecting test feature
50 has an effective diameter that is less than approximately 5 μm .

51 15. (Currently amended): A process for ~~fabricating a magnetic head~~ the chemical mechanical
52 polishing of a wafer surface as described in claim 12, including forming each said array with an
53 array area of at least approximately $400\text{ }\mu\text{m}^2$.

54 16. (Currently amended): A process for ~~fabricating a magnetic head~~ the chemical mechanical
55 polishing of a wafer surface as described in claim 12, including forming each said array of
56 sufficient size to be viewable with an optical microscope, where the projecting test features
57 within each array are too small to be viewable with an optical microscope.

58 17. A process for ~~fabricating a magnetic head~~ the chemical mechanical polishing of a wafer
59 surface as described in claim 12, including forming the diameter of the projecting test features
60 within an array to be associated with a known polishing time in which said upper surface layer of
61 the test feature is removed by the polishing process.

62 18. A process for ~~fabricating a magnetic head~~ the chemical mechanical polishing of a wafer
63 surface as described in claim 17, including forming the different diameter of the projecting test
64 features of each differing array to correspond to a particular polishing time increment.

65 19. A process for ~~fabricating a magnetic head~~ the chemical mechanical polishing of a wafer
66 surface as described in claim 18, wherein said polishing time increment is five seconds.

67 20. A process for ~~fabricating a magnetic head~~ the chemical mechanical polishing of a wafer
68 surface as described in claim 12, including forming said group of arrays to include nine arrays.

69 21. A process for ~~fabricating a magnetic head~~ the chemical mechanical polishing of a wafer
70 surface as described in claim 12, wherein each array within a group of arrays is formed with a
71 unique identification symbol.

72 22. A process for ~~fabricating a magnetic head~~ the chemical mechanical polishing of a wafer
73 surface as described in claim 12, wherein each array includes a plurality of projecting test
74 features that are arranged in a plurality of rows and columns.